

The Strength Of Your Love

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Summary: Mulder and Scully are shot, but love is a powerful thing...

The Strength Of Your Love

Title - The Strength of Your Love

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><br>Rating - R (for blood & gore and general violence)

><br>Classification - SA

><br>Spoilers - none

><br>Keywords - Character death

><br>Summary - Mulder and Scully are shot, but love is a powerful

>thing...<br>

>Disclaimer: Yeah, really...for every person who reads this  
<br>story, I magically receive \$5. Just kidding, FOX...anyway, NO

>I'm not making money from this story, and I have no claims to  
<br>any characters on The X-Files that I borrow for six pages

>here. I do admit to personal (however deluded) claims on a  
<br>certain \*very\* handsome fictional F.B.I. agent named Mulder.

>But anyway. FOX, 1013 Productions, and Chris Carter <br>(otherwise  
known as THE MAN) own it all. All theirs.

>Good enough, now on with the show...<br>=====

><br>

>"Come, cuddle your head on my shoulder, dear, <br>Your head like the  
golden-rod,

>And we will go sailing away from here <br>To the beautiful land of  
Nod."

><br>=====

>Arlington, Virginia<br>12:42 a.m.

>=====

>The sniper leaned closer out the window, his prey in view. He  
<br>peered through the gun sight, trying to find a way to get a  
  
>clear shot at either of his two targets. He could barely see <br>her  
through the window, farther back in the room than the man  
>was. The man would be easy to shoot where he now stood, but <br>the  
woman was still too far away, and he had to take them both  
>if he was to survive the night.<br>  
>He waited. Patience had always been one of his strong points.<br>  
  
>=====<br>  
>Scully stood stiffly in the center of Mulder's living room, <br>her  
arms crossed across her chest impatiently. "Mulder, this  
>is ridiculous." <br>  
>"Scully, I don't want you to leave," Mulder said firmly,  
<br>standing with his back to the window. There was a scrap of  
  
>paper in his hand.<br>  
>"It's late, I'm tired, and I want to go home. I can take care <br>of  
myself, Mulder."  
><br>He held up the piece of paper, showing her what was written on  
  
>it for the tenth time. "If someone left a note under your <br>door  
saying 'Your partner is not safe,' you'd have been  
>concerned, too."<br>  
>She sighed, knowing he was right -- she would have -- but she  
<br>hated feeling helpless. Giving in to danger's threats was  
  
>simply not in her nature. But finally she relented, and sat <br>down  
on the edge of Mulder's couch.  
><br>=====  
><br>The sniper growled. Still too far away. If only something  
  
>could make them both come to the window...<br>  
>Well, he could manage that.<br>  
>=====<br>  
>Mulder stood by the window, his sharp eyes taking in <br>everything  
despite the fact that he wasn't really paying  
>attention. Maybe she was right. No --<br>  
>"Mulder," she said suddenly, curiosity and a smile plain in <br>her  
voice. "Where are your fish?"  
><br>He turned around, a mischievous grin suddenly spreading across  
  
>his face. "I haven't--"<br>  
>Just then, a brilliant light poured through his window. He <br>spun  
around to look, shielding his eyes from the glare.  
  
>"Scully...?"<br>  
>She slowly stood and walked to the window. He backed up a few  
<br>steps, motioning for her to stand in front of him. She was so  
  
>short without her shoes on; he could easily see over her head.<br>  
  
>"It looks like it's coming from the apartment across the  
<br>street," she observed. He squinted. "Scully, I think there's  
  
>someone in there...look."<br>  
>She held her hand up to block the light so she could see <br>better.  
She could just barely distinguish the silhouette of a  
>person, but it was there. "I think you're right, Mulder--" <br>she

began, then stopped as a flash of something red caught her  
>eye. She looked down. A small red pinpoint of light was <br>tracing  
across her upper abdomen. Like a...like a laser. The  
>light across the street went off.<br>  
>She opened her mouth to tell Mulder to get down, to warn him.  
<br>Time seemed to slow to a sickening, sluggish speed. The  
  
>window split in an instant's flash of fire and metal, and she  
<br>heard the glass on the fish tank crack apart. She felt water  
  
>gushing around her face and shards of glass, sharp against her  
<br>arm, and only then realized she was lying on the floor.  
  
><br>After a few moments of nothing, no thoughts, no pain, she  
  
>opened her eyes and understood what had happened. Someone had  
<br>shot at them through the window.  
><br>Mulder.  
><br>She rolled over and struggled to push herself to a half-  
  
>sitting position. He was on the floor behind her, his grey  
t-<br>shirt now stained crimson. Her mind racing, she quickly  
  
>lowered her ear to his chest, and let her breath out in a rush  
<br>as she heard his heart beating. His eyes were open, and she  
  
>leaned over him to look into his face.<br>  
>"Mulder? Talk to me, Mulder," she said, her breath coming  
<br>strangely short. He blinked, and his eyes focused, and  
  
>finally met her face as she pushed his shirt up to reveal a  
<br>massive gunshot wound to his chest. She was unable to hold  
  
>back a stunned gasp, and he looked at her, alarmed. "Wh--" <br>  
  
>"You've been shot. Probably by whoever was in that apartment  
<br>across the street." He sat up slowly, shutting his eyes  
  
>tightly against the pain, and leaned his back against the <br>couch  
as she pulled her jacket off and pressed it to his  
>stomach. "Try to hold that there," she said, looking around <br>for  
something else, anything that she could use to slow the  
>flow of blood. The blanket on the couch. <br>  
>She tried to stand, but found for some reason she couldn't  
<br>without supporting herself by leaning on the coffee table. As  
  
>she pulled the blanket off the couch arm and stumbled back to  
Mulder, he looked at her and his eyes widened a fraction.  
  
>"Scully..." He gestured, suddenly breathless.<br>  
>She looked down to see something dark and glistening spreading  
<br>across the front of her shirt. Shaking, she touched a hand to  
  
>her upper abdomen; her fingers came away sticky with fresh  
<br>blood. A sudden wave of pain overwhelmed her, and she  
  
>collapsed in a crunch of broken glass next to Mulder on the  
<br>floor.  
><br>Her vision blurred once, then came into focus again to see

>Mulder leaning over her, unbuttoning her shirt. "Is it bad?"   
she asked huskily, not really caring about anything but the  
>pain.  
>He met her eyes, then reluctantly nodded. "The bullet went in  
<br>here --" he gestured to the spot he was now pressing the  
  
>blanket to, between her heart and the bottom of her ribcage.   
<br>"I think it somehow caused one of your ribs to puncture a  
>lung," he said slowly. "You've been having real trouble  
<br>breathing." He was shaking and looked pale. His teeth were  
  
>clenched; she could tell he was in excruciating pain.  
>She pushed herself up against the couch and pulled the blanket  
<br>to cover him. It was Mulder who was the real concern, she  
  
>thought. If they didn't get help in time, he would die from   
<br>loss of blood. It was then she remembered the phone, and  
>reached up to Mulder's coffee table to pick up the portable.  
  
>"911, what is your emergency?"  
>"This is...Special Agent Dana Scully...my partner and I have  
<br>been shot..." she gasped, then covered her mouth as she  
  
>suddenly began coughing violently. She opened her mouth to   
<br>speak again, but Mulder slipped the phone out of her fingers  
>and began to speak to the operator. She looked down at her   
<br>hand, splashed with scarlet, and realized the blood on it had  
>come when she coughed.  
>She heard the click of the phone as Mulder hung up. "They're   
<br>on their way," he whispered, dropping the phone to the floor;  
>as it fell, she noticed with a strange sense of calm that it   
<br>was covered with blood. Mulder spread the other half of the  
>blanket over Scully. His arm brushed against her cheek; it   
<br>felt oddly cold and damp and was trembling. She looked at  
>him. His face was grey and he was breathing heavily. She   
<br>didn't need the blanket, she thought to herself, and pressed  
>it down onto his chest. Her mind was numb, and the only other  
<br>thing she could think to do for him was to keep him warm. She  
  
>lay down on top of him, her head on his shoulder, reaching up  
<br>shakily to stroke his arm. "Hold on," she murmured, her voice  
  
>barely audible. She tried to hold back a cough, but it burst   
<br>out anyway, and she nearly choked on a surge of blood. Mulder  
>looked down at her, his eyes filling with concern.  
>She looked up, wiping away a trickle of blood running out of   
<br>the corner of her mouth, and then began coughing again, the  
>tremors ripping agonizingly through her chest. Her head fell  
<br>back onto his shoulder, and she closed her eyes. Sleep seemed  
  
>so inviting, like a warm robe in a freezing room, and she  
<br>drifted towards it slowly. Through the fog she could hear  
  
>Mulder's faint voice, calling her back. "Scully! Wake up,  
<br>Scully...you have to wake up," he said, his voice raw and  
  
>weak. His hands were on her shoulders, and reluctantly she  
<br>opened her eyes to feel blood thickening in her mouth. She  
  
>shivered, pulling herself closer to him. So this was how it

<br>would end.

><br>He looked down tenderly at her, and his hand came up to stroke

>her hair. His eyes were beginning to glaze, and the blanket <br>was completely soaked through already. Pushing it aside with >a shudder of fear, she put one hand over the wound and reached <br>for a pillow with the other. She could hear his heartbeat, in

>rhythm with the blood pulsing out of him, blood that ran <br>warmly through her fingers as she kept her hand tightly >pressed to his chest. "Thank you," he murmured thickly, his <br>voice sounding strange and slurred, and his hand slipped

>loosely off her head. She looked up in alarm. His head had <br>fallen limply to one side and his eyelids were halfway closed.

><br>"Mulder!" she said, as loud as she could, and then had to gasp

>for breath, trying desperately to fill her lungs despite the <br>unbearable pain. She held the pillow tightly to his chest

>with one hand, and used the other to stroke his face. He was <br>freezing cold. His eyes were open again, at least, but to her

>dismay she realized they were glassy and unfocused. He was <br>losing consciousness. "Mulder, wake up," she said again,

>sharply, and his eyes opened again. As she saw the tears in <br>his eyes, on his cheeks, she became aware that tears were >pouring down her face. He's dying, she thought with a shock. <br>Before she knew what she was saying, the words were already

>out of her mouth.<br>

>"Mulder...I love you, Mulder," she sobbed, watching the life <br>slowly drain out of him. He was covered in blood, some of it

>hers, but most of it his. Their eyes locked, and for an <br>instant, his eyes cleared. He nodded, the motion

>infinitesimally small but full of meaning, and his lips <br>struggled towards a smile. As she looked into his eyes,

>seeing them begin to dull, she was dimly aware of the sound of <br>rustling feet down the hall.

><br>"Mulder...!" she cried, as she watched his chest slowly stop

>rising and falling and felt his body go slack. She coughed <br>again, painfully, ignoring the blood that filled her mouth.

>"Mulder...please...." She pressed herself against him, trying <br>to somehow impart to him strength, her only remaining >strength, whatever she had. She was so cold, and her <br>breathing sounded harsh and shallow. It didn't matter what >happened to her, she thought, if only he could live. She lay <br>on his chest, ignoring the pain in her own, tears and blood >mixed on her face, pressing her faintly beating heart to his <br>still one. He had to live...

><br>She shuddered involuntarily, as if something had been taken

>out of her, and felt herself fall completely limp onto the <br>blood-covered floor.

><br>Then something...shifted. She saw with dimming vision the  
>paramedics running into the room and felt two strong arms <br>around  
her supporting her. A wave of pain hit her and her  
>eyes blurred. She could feel her blood pouring from her <br>chest.  
It was cold...and...she...couldn't...breathe; then a  
>grey film came to rest over her eyes, and all was night.<br>  
><br>=====  
>8:36 a.m.<br>=====  
><br>The familiar sound of a heart monitor was the first thing  
>Scully heard as she slowly drifted to consciousness. Then she  
<br>heard his voice, calling her back.  
><br>"Scully? Doctor..."  
><br>She opened her eyes, seeing blurrily at first. She was lying  
>in a hospital bed, a doctor was looking at her closely while  
<br>checking her vitals...and Mulder was sitting in a wheelchair  
>beside her bed.<br>  
>"Mulder..." she wheezed, so tired she didn't even try to sit <br>up.  
The doctor eyed her, and then glanced at Mulder. "I'll  
>leave you two alone," he said quietly, then left the room.<br>  
>Mulder grinned at her. "Welcome back," he murmured, leaning <br>over  
to brush a loose strand of hair out of her face. She  
>closed her eyes, trying to remember why she was in a hospital.  
<br>"What happened?" she whispered.  
><br>"You don't remember?" Mulder asked. She shook her head  
>wearily. "You were at my apartment and someone shot through <br>my  
window. You almost died, Scully," he said quietly. "The  
>bullet went into your chest and caused your right lung to  
<br>collapse, and the combination of loss of blood and lack of  
>oxygen nearly killed you." She remembered now, but...it <br>didn't  
seem right. She hadn't been shot in the chest, he had,  
>and...<br>  
>"But you...Mulder, you were the one who was nearly killed."<br>  
>He frowned. "No, Scully, I lost a little blood, but that's <br>all."  
He pulled up his sleeve, exposing a neat white bandage  
>just below his shoulder. Seeing her disbelief, he continued.  
<br>"The paramedics said it was a miracle you were alive at all,  
>you had lost so much blood. You were completely unconscious <br>when  
they arrived." He swallowed. "I was really afraid for  
>you, Scully."<br>  
>She was quiet for a minute, knowing she would never fully  
<br>understand what had happened. It was impossible, a  
>miracle...and yet here they were. She had had the strength of  
<br>his love.  
><br>She smiled inwardly. "Thank you." He leaned over to kiss her  
>forehead. "What for?" he asked softly.<br>  
>"For...being there with me," she said, aware of how inadequate  
<br>her words were. He looked at her deeply, both filled with the

>realization of how close they had come to losing each other.  
<br>"Scully...you know..." He trailed off, unable to finish his  
>thought. She smiled and took his hand, and he met her eyes. <br>  
>"Anytime."<br>  
><br>=====

> <p><p>

End  
file.